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ABSTRACT

This report is a summary of discussions in the fall and winter of 1989-90 in more than 1,700 community forums convened by civic and educational institutions in 47 states. Convenors included colleges and universities, churches, museums and libraries, and local civic and service organizations. The National Issues Forum is the largest ongoing effort in the United States to engage citizens in nonpartisan discussion and debate about pressing domestic issues. The three issues discussed were the drug crisis, the day care dilemma, and threats to the environment. In discussing the drug crisis, there was considerable support for stepped-up interdiction efforts, for expanding domestic law enforcement efforts against drug sellers, for expanded efforts to discourage drug use, and, if necessary, for aggressive prosecution of drug users. The most widespread concerns in discussing day care were the absence of high-quality child care services, not their cost, and the lack of federal regulations to cover the care of young children. In discussing threats to the environment, those who opposed building more nuclear power plants outnumbered those who favored doing so by a slight margin; roughly three-fourths of the participants favored increasing government funding to spur development of solar energy; and most participants would agree to a tax increase for development of solar energy and to provide additional mass transit in urban areas, in order to reduce air pollution caused by gasoline-fueled vehicles. A directory of convenors is included in the document. (CML)

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ON SECOND THOUGHT

A REPORT ON THE 1989-1990 NATIONAL ISSUES FORUMS

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Contents

1. Introduction: The Public and Politics 5

2. The Drug Crisis: Public Strategies for Breaking the Habit 9

3. The Day Care Dilemma: Who Should Be Responsible for the Children? 14

4. The Environment at Risk: Responding to Growing Dangers 18

National Issues Forums
Directory of Convenors 22

Foreword
to
On Second Thought

This report on the 1989-1990 National Issues Forums (NIF) is a summary of the conversations that took place this past fall and winter in more than 1,700 community Forums and study circles convened by civic and educational institutions in 47 states, including colleges and universities, churches, museums and libraries, local civic and service organizations. NIF is the largest ongoing effort in the nation to engage American citizens in nonpartisan discussion and debate about pressing domestic issues. Issues under discussion this past year were the drug crisis, the day care dilemma, and threats to the environment.

In the course of these discussions, participants' thoughts and feelings change in certain ways. These changes, reflected in ballots filled out before and, again, after the meetings, provide a glimpse of which assumptions and conclusions people are willing to revise once they learn more about an issue, and once they see how their views differ from others in their communities. This report draws upon those ballots, as well as upon participants' comments and reports from moderators.

While many of the sentiments expressed in the ballots correspond closely to findings from national polls, this should not be mistaken for a survey of randomly selected respondents. Participants in these Forums were not necessarily representative. While they live in many different parts of the nation and represent a broad spectrum of opinion, they are on average slightly older and better educated than most Americans. They are also more likely to get involved in public issues than a majority of their peers. The outcome of these Forums is significant not because Forum participants are a representative group of Americans, but rather because they show what people think after being exposed to pertinent information, provided in specially written, nonpartisan study materials, and taking part in open discussions.

In a sense, NIF provides a counterpoint to that myriad of associations that come together to further some particular interest. The premise of NIF is that we already know a great deal about where and how we differ; what we need to discover is how and where we can agree. These Forums are not convened with the expectation that, within a few hours, participants will reach consensus about what course of action the nation should follow. The Forums do, however, provide an occasion for thoughtful discussion about what would be best, not just for certain groups, but for the entire nation.

On Second Thought summarizes what happens when thousands of Americans who have no special stakes in these issues and no predetermined positions get together to talk about pressing public issues. It has been prepared for the National Issues Forums by the Kettering Foundation; and the section that reports directly from the Forums was written by Keith Melville of The Public Agenda Foundation, who was assisted in his analysis by John Doble, Rachael Jeck, and Amy Richardson.

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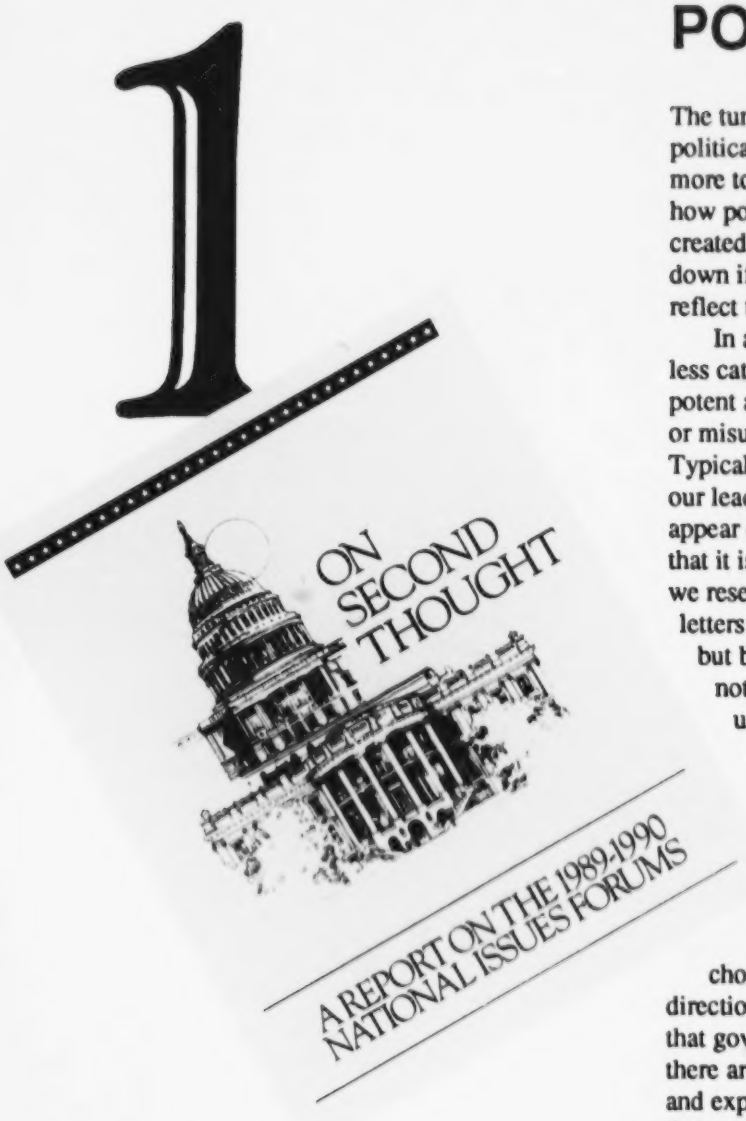


INTRODUCTION: THE PUBLIC AND POLITICS

The tumultuous winds of change sweeping over the political landscape of Eastern Europe serve once more to remind us that governments — no matter how powerfully entrenched — are, in the beginning, created by the public and can, in the end, be brought down if they do not sufficiently understand and reflect the fundamental values of their citizens.

In a democratic society, change occurs in much less cataclysmic fashion. The public has no less potent a role to play, but many of us have forgotten or misunderstood its meaning and importance. Typically, we tend to assume that our job is to elect our leaders and vote "yes" or "no" on issues that appear on the ballot — when we *do* vote. We assume that it is the job of our elected leaders to govern. Oh, we reserve the right to gripe on street corners, write letters to our representatives, and march in protest; but basically, in politics as usual, citizens often do not see any more useful function for themselves until the next election. And, recent studies show that policymakers, too, have beome less attuned to public input, unable to hear the voice of the people in the cacaphony of conflicting special interest demands.

Yet politics does not begin and end in the election of officials and the passage of legislation. It begins in the choices that people make about the purposes and direction of the community. There are many things that governments are uniquely equipped to do. But there are certain things that bureaucrats, officials, and experts — even at their best — can never do. Only the public can define the purposes of the community, large or small, choose the directions in which it should move, create common interests, build common ground, and generate the political will to act together.

This booklet reflects the judgment of groups of citizens, throughout the nation, who are doing just that.

Politics as Usual

Typically — in politics as usual — we frame issues

in terms of positions. Issues are presented to the public with the arguments "for" in one column and the arguments "against" in another. Or a case is made from a position left of center and then balanced with one from the right. And there is often a compromise position somewhere between the two, touted as having broad, even majority, support. Facts are piled up to support the various partisan arguments. Now we begin to engage in solution wars, debating which of the predetermined solutions is best — little aware that there is still no agreement on the nature of the problem and uninformed about our full range of options or how our values are reflected or might be affected by those options.

In politics as usual, we try to educate the public by giving them the facts. And, certainly, relevant facts are essential. Still, if the community is to make wise choices it has to know more than just the facts. A community has to know the constraints on its choices, the likely costs and consequences of various options, the connections between one particular choice and other choices. And it must know these things in the context of the different meanings facts have for different people. You don't get that kind of knowledge from experts or political leaders; you don't get it from the media, or by learning more facts; political leaders can't get it from their advisers or pollsters. It is reached only when people talk together, weigh alternatives together, and find out why, to each of them, some alternatives seem more compelling than others.

To govern itself, the public must see how the whole of the community fits together as a system. Knowing only particular parts won't do the job. The public's knowledge of itself is fundamentally an extended knowledge of how things are connected. Such knowledge may seem a tall order, but what makes it possible is collective memory and the insights that come from shared reflection. To acquire this kind of public knowledge, we have to have a dialogue that is shared, reflective, and, most of all, deliberative.

Public Opinion and Public Judgment

Conventional politics is often seduced by the siren song of raw opinion — what people think the first time they are asked about an issue or a candidate. That is the volatile top layer of "public opinion" skimmed off by pollsters and policymakers when they identify a course of action that may have the approval of 55 percent of the people. But this means, of course, that 45 percent of the people do *not* approve. We are so familiar with politics as head-counting — as though it were a marketplace transaction where the prize goes to the highest bidder — that we are prone to forget that decision by majority vote is not democracy's best resort; it is the *last* resort.

Certainly we are all prone to snap opinions and knee-jerk reactions. Yet we also have the capacity for changing our first impressions into more shared and reflective judgment. *Judgment*, unlike *opinion*, is what we think the second time — after we have thought about the implications of our position, talked with others, understood what different human values drive them, and "worked through" the conflicts that arise from those differing values. It is the product of a perspective that is not simply comprehensive, but integrated. This is the kind of perspective in which we see how others' convictions stem from values that, in part, we share; in which we come to understand not only connections but consequences; in which we see how the whole of the community functions as a social system.

Our political opinions are shaped by our values, and many of our values are at variance with one another. But when we deliberate, we dig below layers of differences to unearth a deeper set of values that are, to some extent, shared by all of us. When we do that, we begin to form a new, more comprehensive view. That view is the common ground that enables us to arrive at shared judgments. And a shared judgment is what enables us to act together, while retaining differences in our opinions and priorities.

Talk and Action

There is no conventional political wisdom more often repeated than the saying, "talk is cheap." But talk is not cheap. Nor is it the antithesis of action. On the contrary, *talk* is *action*. In politics, talk has two essential functions. The first is to enable the community to inform itself with a public knowledge that goes beyond the "facts" as they are usually presented, and to discover the facts of different people's experiences. The second is to "work through" the conflicts of values that lie deep within every issue. Public talk goes beyond *talking about* to *talking through* the issues.

Public talk is not an end in itself, of course. It produces results. When we talk deliberatively and work through an issue, perspectives change. As

opinions interact with one another they are transformed into shared and reflective *judgments*. We see what is happening and who is affected more clearly because we see more comprehensively. Once this happens, our sense of a problem and how various people relate to it will change. So can our inclination to act. If the working through goes on long enough, common ground, a sense of politically supportable actions, emerges.

For judgment is more than a way of seeing; it is an inclination to act in a certain way. It follows from a change in perspective because, when we see things differently, we are usually disposed to act differently. Practicing politics in the usual way leads us to seek either agreement or compromise. Yet agreement among a majority can leave a disaffected minority of considerable proportion; and compromise always lies somewhere *between* us, satisfying no one. It is more useful to look for common ground. Common ground is not the ground of total agreement and it is not the ground of compromise. Common ground is shareable ground. It does not require that we be in absolute agreement. It is an area whose boundaries are marked by the political actions we can live with; it encompasses the range of actions that are politically possible.

The National Issues Forums

Each winter, the National Issues Forums identify three issues of pressing national concern for discussion in the Forums that will begin the following fall. A clearly written, nonpartisan booklet that presents three or four major policy choices is then developed by The Public Agenda Foundation for each issue. This year the issues were drugs, day care, and environmental protection.

Most special interest discussions, party platforms, and conversations based on ideology tend to lead us, at best, to line up "for or against" a proposed course of action. In that kind of politics you are always either a winner or a loser. What is distinctive about the choices laid out in the NIF issue books is that each is informed by a clear, understandable, and to some extent even *shared* human impulse; there is something about each choice that we warm to. And that is why, as we weigh the pros and cons of each, there is always the possibility of creating a piece of common ground among us, instead of merely voting each choice up or down.

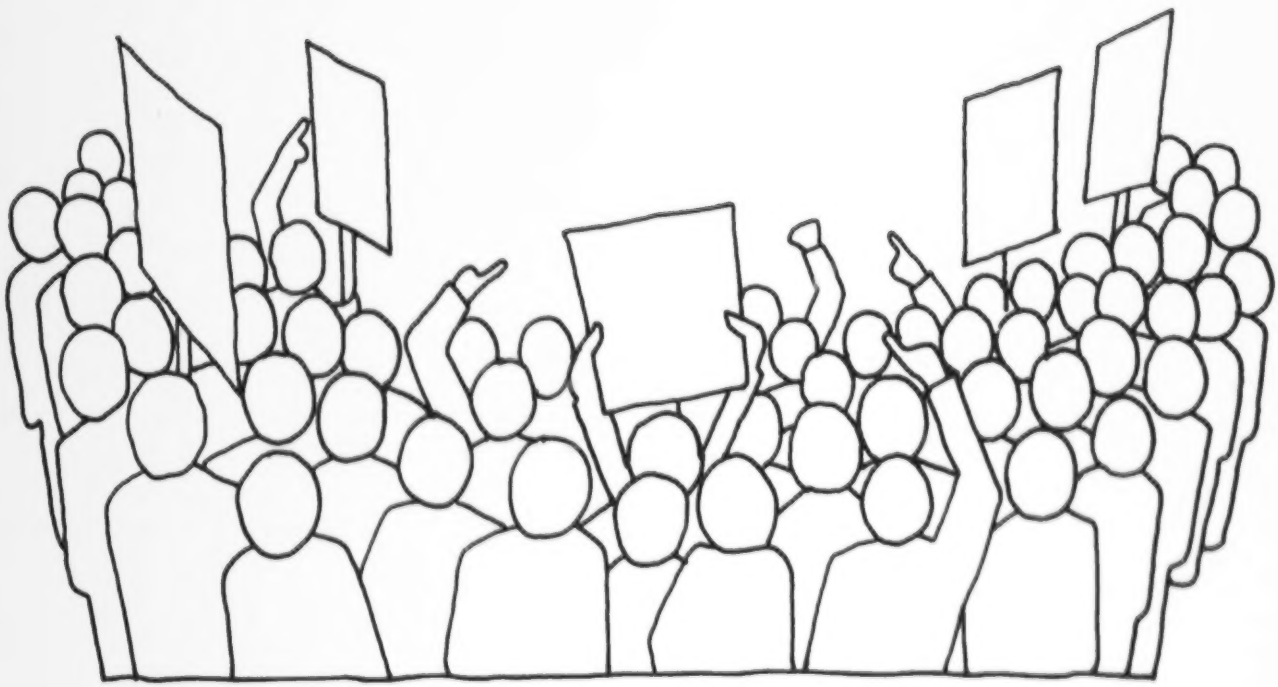
Each of these choices is a human choice, not somebody's predetermined solution. Choices are designed so that we respond to them, so that as we talk about them we can hammer out the differences between us. Viable public policy — that is to say, a policy that we can *all* stand behind — is not the "choice" that gets 51 percent of the vote and leaves 49 percent of the people unhappy. It is a course of action, a policy direction, that we are prepared to accept after weighing all of the alternatives in conversation together. You can't get at this any way other than by having people talk through options that reflect shareable concerns. NIF "choices" are identified because they will help us to a satisfying, political solution, not because they are the three or four proposed policies that happen to be in the existing political arena.

In politics as usual, debates are designed to show where we disagree, what is right about my side and wrong about yours. The kind of public talk in which these Forums engage is designed to enable us to discover what we share. In politics as usual, negotiations are designed to reach compromise, to discover what each side will give up. *This* kind of public talk, on the other hand, is designed to discover a new perspective, a view of the whole that does not exist until we bring our individual views together.

The Public Playing Its Part

The National Issues Forums, whose work for the past year is summed up in the following pages, continue to play an indispensable role in fostering serious public talk. Making choices about the nation's purposes and setting directions on critical policy issues are their central function. They provide occasions for confronting the costs and consequences that constrain all choices. They provide the environment for working through the conflicts between values that make choices difficult. Their job is to transform first opinion into public judgment. Forums make it possible for people with disparate positions and interests to find mutually acceptable responses to common problems.

In a sense, the National Issues Forums are an exercise program, designed to help citizens talk about alternative approaches to important issues and work toward choices that are based on shareable concerns. Now, exercises are specialized behaviors that prepare us for practical behaviors. The day after an exercise class, people do not go around touching their toes or doing push-ups on the way to work. And after a Forum, the participants do not go out the next day solidly proclaiming one of the policy options. But



when a community has to make decisions about candidates or about specific legislation, these citizens are prepared because they have participated in an exercise that has left them with a better map of political realities, of what is shareable and what is not, of where the possibilities are and where they are not.

Today, our most serious political impasses are those in which the very definition of the problem is unclear — where the question is not who gets what, but whether we can take any useful action at all. Such problems are not those that governments and their experts can fix by themselves. This book, *On Second Thought*, provides a small glimpse of the public playing its part.

The Drug Crisis: Public Strategies for Breaking the Habit

Soon after President Bush unveiled a major new narcotics control program on January 25, he was asked if he thought the government's success in dealing with the drug problem would be a major test of his administration. "I think it's the big one," he replied, "and I think it's a test not just for the administration, but for every community in the country, every state, every local government, for the people."

Judging by the comments made in the opening moments of many of the Forums on the drug problem, there is a broad consensus that this is the biggest problem facing the nation — and that coming to terms with it poses a major test of our ability to respond to public problems.

But while the White House indicates that its anti-drug strategy is beginning to succeed, most participants in the NIF meetings on this topic remain unconvinced. Asked whether the nation's illegal drug problem is worse than it was five years ago, nine out of ten people agreed that it is. Significantly, when asked about the drug problem in their own communities, most said that the local drug problem is worse than it was a few years ago.

What Should Be Done?

Whether or not success is already apparent, the central question is what anti-drug strategy is most likely to be effective. In the words of a recent *New York Times* editorial, it would be desirable to find "a coherent policy on which both parties could unite. It would be a welcome triumph if the two sides could stop fighting each other and concentrate on the common enemy."

The purpose of these community Forums on drugs was to provide an occasion for talking about how to respond to the drug problem. What is likely to prove successful in stopping drugs? Which measures are compatible with the other things we value — such as civil liberties, the freedom to do what we choose except when individual behavior harms others or creates a public menace. Which measures are simply unworkable?

In the Forums, participants examined and discussed four broad strategies: stepping up the international drug war to stop drugs at the source; cracking down on domestic dealers; reducing demand by targeting drug users; and legalizing drugs.

Stopping Drugs at the Source

The international narcotics trade is the source of roughly 80 percent of the illicit drugs used in the United States. Each year, traffickers smuggle into this country some 5 metric tons of heroin, more than 100 metric tons of cocaine, and an estimated 5,000 metric tons of marijuana.

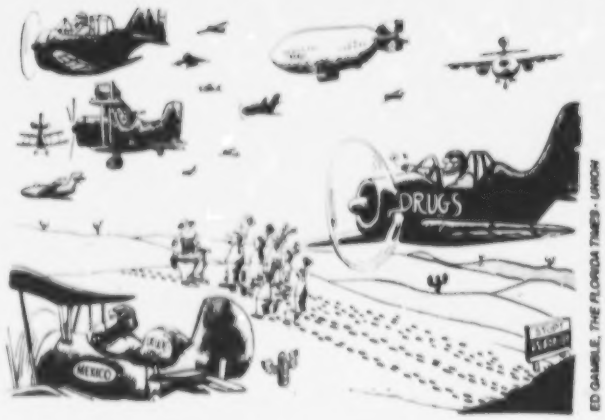
Some people insist that the most promising way to cope with the drug crisis is to destroy narcotics at their source or in transit, before they get to the U.S. distribution network.

For this purpose, the administration's new anti-drug plan proposes an additional $206 million in aid to military and law enforcement authorities of the three major cocaine-growing nations— Peru, Bolivia, and Colombia — as well as money to encourage farmers in those nations to grow other crops.

While many of the Forum participants were uncertain whether they support the idea of giving aid to farmers in such nations as an incentive to stop growing crops, some supported it. In the words of a middle-aged woman from Troy, Ohio: "Something needs to be done now. Let's start at the source in Colombia and Bolivia, and pay farmers to stop growing illicit drugs."

On the whole, however, this is not a very popular measure, nor one that most people think will be effective in solving America's drug problem. By the time the Forums ended, those who opposed subsidies to drug-growing farmers outnumbered those who favored them by about 2-to-1. Similarly, there was a good deal of opposition to proposals to impose sanctions on countries that tolerate the drug industry. Finally, as many participants opposed such sanctions as those who favored them.

Many participants felt that there are serious problems in attempting to deal with the drug problem in this way. They worried about the implications of interfering in the affairs of other nations. Some felt that subsidies to drug-growing farmers to persuade them to switch crops would never work. Most of all, many Forum participants subscribe to the "push down, pop up" theory: even if we are successful in suppressing or eliminating drugs from one supplier nation, other suppliers will fill the void — and America's drug problem will remain just as serious as it is today.



As a man from Marietta, Ohio, put it: "Let's stop putting on a political show that makes it look as if we're doing something in Colombia. We have to solve the problem where the demand exists, in our country."

If the drug trade cannot be stopped at its source, perhaps it can be stopped at the borders. Proposals to step up border patrols, to increase interdiction efforts, and to use the military to keep drugs out of the country all commanded substantial support. By the time the Forums ended, 3-to-1 majorities supported greatly stepped-up border patrols. By the same margin, there was broad support for using the U. S. military to fight the drug war along the borders.

Repeatedly, Forum participants said that this is a war, and should be fought like any other war — with the best resources we can marshal. "Considering the gravity of the situation," said a male Forum participant from Garden Grove, California, "the Band-Aid approaches we're currently using are unrealistic."

Domestic Law Enforcement

After considering stepped-up efforts to stop the drug trade at the borders, most of the Forums turned to domestic enforcement. The past few years, the message of one poll after another is that the public strongly supports tough domestic law enforcement to deal with the drug problem. A 1988 *Washington Post* survey, for example, found that a large majority supports such measures as allowing police to stop cars at random to search for drugs, and that roughly half the American public favors mandatory 1-year jail sentences for cocaine users, even first-time offenders.

By and large, the get-tough approach was favored by many Forum participants. Initially, people voiced their concern that local law enforcement officials seem overwhelmed by drug dealers who are

bolder, more visible, and more solidly entrenched than ever before. In most Forums, there was strong support for the assertion that law enforcement officials must act more forcefully to apprehend and punish drug dealers. "As long as drugs are available in our communities," said a woman from Hollywood, Florida, "the drug problem will never be stopped."

Some people countered with the assertion that if the current dealers are jailed, others are ready to take their place as long as drug selling remains a lucrative business. But most people are adamant about the importance of stepped-up enforcement. "We've got to send a message to the drug dealers," said a woman from West Palm Beach, Florida. "They need to know that we will not tolerate the destruction of our community and our country. We will take any measures possible to stop them."

The sentiments expressed in that comment were widely supported. A large majority is convinced not only that stepped-up domestic enforcement is important to "send a message" to the drug dealers, but also that such measures will be effective in dealing with the problem. When asked about the probable effects of cracking down on drug sellers through increased police patrols and harsher penalties for dealers, an overwhelming majority of these Forum participants (87%) said such measures would be effective in cutting down on the drug supply.

And with regard to penalties for convicted drug dealers, Forum participants definitely favored a get-tough approach. Although about 20 percent were uncertain whether small-time drug dealers should be arrested and prosecuted, roughly two-thirds of Forum participants favor such measures — even if they clog the courts and require building more prisons. After all, as a number of people said, the law specifies that drugs are illegal, so we cannot permit open-air "drug markets."

Nonetheless, some law enforcement measures are considered too intrusive, too much of a threat to our civil liberties. Participants were cautious about giving law enforcement officials free reign to search cars or homes without a search warrant. Such measures were opposed by a 2-to-1 margin.

Finally, Forum participants addressed a question that members of Congress have debated on several occasions, whether the law should permit the execution of drug traffickers who commit or order murder. By the time the Forums ended, those who favored imposing the death penalty under such circumstances outnumbered those who opposed it by a 3-to-1 margin.

Going After Drug Users

If a majority of Forum participants strongly supports stepped-up domestic enforcement activities, there is strong support, too, for cracking down on drug users, tackling the drug problem by making new efforts to reduce demand. A recent federally sponsored study found that more than 50 percent of a national sample of high school students questioned said that they have on at least one occasion used an illicit drug. An estimated 23 million Americans continue to use illicit drugs at least once a month.

From the perspective of those who favor reducing demand as the most promising solution, this is a very troubling symptom. If a substantial fraction of those users could be persuaded to stop, the drug market would shrink, sparing potential victims of drug-related crime.

Accordingly, advocates of this approach favor various measures to reduce demand, ranging from expanded drug education to mandatory drug testing, and punitive measures targeted at users.

Not surprisingly, there is widespread support for expanded drug education efforts. "Educating kids is the key," says a woman from Long Beach, California. "If they knew the effects and the dangers, they might think twice before getting involved." In the words of a female participant in Forums in the Lebanon, Ohio, area, "Even though its results won't be immediately apparent, we have to step up educational efforts to reduce the demand for drugs."

Summarizing the results of discussion in Meridian, Mississippi, on this topic, a Forum moderator says that "Educational programs are potentially the most powerful long-term weapons against drug abuse. Such programs should be part of the curriculum from kindergarten through twelfth grade."

Although many Forum participants had reservations about mandatory drug-testing programs, a solid 70 percent majority finally agreed that private companies should conduct random tests, even if some people regard this as an invasion of privacy. Mandatory testing — in schools and the workplace — was widely regarded by Forum participants as an effective way to identify users, and thus to reduce demand.

While roughly one-quarter of the people who took part in these discussions opposed harsher penalties for all identified drug users — even those who occasionally use marijuana — two out of three favor such penalties. Interestingly, the proposal to impose harsher penalties for all drug users receives far more support among younger Forum participants than among those who are 30 or older.

"HOLD YOUR FIRE... THIS IS WILLIAM J. BENNETT... THE NEW DRUG CZAR! YOU CAN FORGET THE 'JUST SAY NO' CAMPAIGN... WE REALLY MEAN BUSINESS THIS TIME.!!"

Legalizing Drugs

Although many Americans favor a get-tough approach, a vocal minority has recently put forward quite a different view of how to deal with the drug crisis. In April 1988, Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke, who had broad experience in prosecuting drug sellers as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, stunned a meeting of the Conference of Mayors by declaring that the United States is losing the war on drugs. Schmoke attracted nationwide attention when he said "Let's at least have a national debate about decriminalizing drugs."

Schmoke and others who favor this approach are convinced that a strategy that legalizes at least some drugs is far more likely to succeed than existing anti-drug efforts. While William Bennett has said that legalization would be "an unqualified national disaster," various spokesmen for this position are convinced that we need to radically rethink our drug strategy.

When the Forum discussions turned to legalization, many people were considering the proposal for the first time. To some, legalization seemed both sensible and compelling. "We could learn from what they have done in the Netherlands," said a woman from Tuscaloosa, Alabama, "by combining anti-drug education with legalization to reduce the problem." Some Forum participants supported legalizing marijuana but not other, more addictive drugs. In the words of a middle-aged woman from West Palm Beach, Florida, "We could use the tax revenues from legalized marijuana to help support other efforts in the war on drugs, such as increasing money for treatment."

As the discussion on legalization continued, some people who initially opposed the idea were persuaded of its merits. Overall, the percentage who favored legalizing marijuana increased — from about 20 to 26 percent — over the course of these discussions.

Still, the majority view closely reflected the results of recent national polls on this topic. After the Forums were over, two-thirds of the participants still *opposed* the legalization of marijuana, and opposition was broadly shared among participants of all ages. A clear majority regarded legalization as an ineffective way of dealing with America's drug crisis, and some viewed it as a dangerously ill-conceived proposal.

In the words of a woman from Anaheim, California, "I think legalizing drugs is the worst thing we could do." A majority of participants in Forums held

at Oakton Community College in Des Plaines, Illinois, concluded, in the moderator's words, that "legalization of drugs is just too great a risk for the nation. We agree with psychiatrist Robert Coles that legalization would amount to moral surrender." Participants in many Forums voiced their concern that legalization sends mixed signals — and on balance the wrong message — about our attitude toward drugs.

Drug Treatment

While much of the discussion of responses to the drug crisis was dominated by military metaphors — by talk of "escalating threats," "stepped-up efforts," and "winning the war" — many participants also recognized that drug addiction is a *medical* problem that requires a therapeutic response.

Some people expressed surprise that drug treatment is so expensive. Yearly treatment costs range from several thousand dollars per person for drug-free outpatient programs to $15,000 a year or more for residential treatment programs.

Still, most people were convinced that providing drug treatment to people who need it is an investment worth making. Roughly three-quarters of the participants favored providing drug treatment for anyone who needs it, even if doing so is very costly. When participants were asked what message they would like to convey to elected officials about dealing with the drug crisis, many people wrote that drug treatment facilities must be expanded.

One of the most persuasive arguments for expanding treatment facilities is that such programs cater to the heaviest users, who are most responsible for keeping sellers in business and who commit the most crimes to support their habits. When treatment programs are properly run, most Forum participants agreed, they are effective in curtailing heavy users' demands for drugs.

A Broad Agreement

In summary, there was not much support for the proposal to stop drugs at their source through such measures as subsidies for drug-growing farmers who agree to switch to other crops. And legalizing drugs is not an approach that many people are ready to support.

There is, however, considerable support for stepped-up interdiction efforts, for expanding domestic law enforcement efforts against drug sellers, and for expanded efforts to discourage drug use, and — if necessary — aggressively prosecute drug users.

Most people are convinced that drug abuse is a chronic problem that can never be completely eliminated. At the same time, however, they are convinced that many things can be done to significantly reduce the problem.

Perhaps the most striking theme in the Forums was the inclination of many participants to regard this as a war, which deserves the same kind of all-out effort we would make in other circumstances where the nation's vital interests are threatened. "This is a war," said a man from Vestal, New York, "and we should fight it like war." A woman from Dayton, Ohio, echoed those sentiments, saying that, "We should fight this with all of the social, economic, political, and military resources we have."

Significantly, there was general recognition that fighting such a war will require a massive infusion of public funds. A man from Lake Worth, Florida, wrote, saying that "we must stop using dollars as an excuse for tolerating this crisis." Asked what message he would like to send to elected officials, a man from Yucca Valley, California, said, "Don't be afraid to provide ample financial resources, even if it means higher taxes." Even more emphatically, a man from Endicott, New York, said, "Tax us to pay for whatever it takes!"

In this respect, too, the message from Forum participants generally mirrors national polls. A September 1989 *Washington Post*/ABC News poll, for example, found that two out of three people nationwide said they are ready to pay more to fight the war on drugs.

The overall message from these Forums on the drug crisis is decidedly "get tough" and "do more." In this sense, there is strong support for the hard-line program proposed in the administration's new narcotics control plan, which features more hardware for the border patrol, more prosecutors, more law enforcement officials, and more drug testing.

The President's program puts great faith in the potential of law enforcement strategies. Overall, the results from these Forums suggest that most of the American public shares that faith. Indeed, it would appear from these Forums that many Americans favor a more ambitious and expensive program than the one put forward by the administration — and one that emphasizes drug treatment to a greater extent.

The Day Care Dilemma: Who Should Be Responsible for the Children?

As the 1990s begin, an unprecedented amount of legislative activity regarding child care is taking place in Washington and in state capitals. Whether motivated by concern for the disadvantaged, concern about training the work force of the future, or relieving the stress experienced by working parents, child care proposals proliferate. In the words of Republican Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah, "These are the most important social bills in the entire 101st Congress."

One reason elected officials are paying so much attention to child care is that a record number of mothers is in the labor force. Consequently, child care is a matter of immediate personal concern to millions of American voters. In one of the most dramatic changes of the past 40 years, the percentage of married women with children under 6 who work in the labor force increased from 12 percent in 1950 to 57 percent in 1987. Of the 10 million children under 6 who have working mothers, two-thirds have mothers who work full-time.

Adjusting to women's new roles has required wholesale changes in family life. In particular, the rapid entry of married women into the labor force has fundamentally altered the way young children are raised. In 1950, most families performed child-rearing duties on their own, calling on relatives or neighbors from time to time to help. Today, however, it is a different story. At all income levels, parents scramble to put together child care arrangements that meet their children's needs and their own.

A Patchwork Arrangement

The child care "system" is widely regarded as a patchwork that is inadequate to the needs of parents as well as children. Many Americans — and most of the participants in NIF Forums on this topic — agree with the assertion President Bush made in his first

address to Congress, that child care "is one of the most important issues facing the nation."

But when it comes to specific proposals about what should be done, there is no consensus among members of Congress. Some child care initiatives would expand Head Start-type programs for the disadvantaged, or subsidize day care for low- and moderate-income families. Others focus on setting standards for day care providers.

Alternatively, some feel that the most promising course of action is to put more of the burden of responding to the needs of families with young children on employers. This is a matter of particular interest to the White House, where a special task force is currently pondering whether the benefits of a proposed day care center in the New Executive Office Building justify its considerable cost.

Various proposals are being considered at a time when federal spending programs are severely constrained, when business is trying to control benefit costs to remain competitive in the worldwide market, and when opinion polls show that the public's desire for social services is exceeded only by its reluctance to pay higher taxes.

With Congress looking to fulfill its pledge to help parents with young children, deep divisions have become apparent about such fundamental matters as the government's role and its limits, and what services people should be entitled to regardless of their income.

In discussions that touched on each of these questions, thousands of participants in this year's NIF Forums talked about what should be done for young children and their parents. The results of those discussions cast a revealing light on what measures the public is willing to support.

Who's Responsible?

Traditionally, of course, the care of preschool children was the parents' responsibility, especially the mother's. When a middle-aged man in a Forum held in Lisle, New York, said that "child care is fundamentally a family duty," he expressed a view that is still widely held. Especially in the opening moments of the Forums on child care, that sentiment was repeatedly stated. Being a good mother to a young child, said a woman from Indianapolis, Indiana, "is the most important job in the world." What we should try to do, said another woman from Indianapolis, is to "provide incentives for women to stay at home."

Some participants made it clear that they oppose

child care subsidies for families in which the mother is a wage earner. In Park Ridge, Illinois, several participants voiced their feelings about this subject. "The best, most effective, and least costly Department of Health, Education and Welfare is still the family," said one woman. Asked what message she would like to convey to elected officials, another participant in that Forum said, "If you pass any new legislation, make sure it encourages women to raise their own children, rather than encouraging them to work outside the home. We are weakening our country when we let the family erode."

Although that position was strongly stated, it was a minority view. By a 2-to-1 margin, Forum participants *disagreed* with the assertion that child care is a personal problem that each family should be expected to deal with on its own. At the same time, however, many people were wary about further encouraging a situation in which growing numbers of young children are tended by paid, day care workers. Over the course of the Forums, there was increasing support for the proposition that the government should provide financial incentives to encourage mothers to stay home and care for their own preschool children. By the end of the Forums, those who agreed with that assertion outnumbered those who disagreed.

Still, there was general recognition that most women today want to have *both* children and a career, and that social arrangements should be made accordingly. Even those who expressed a personal conviction that it is better for preschool children to have a parent as their full-time caretaker tended to agree that the new realities of the work force and of family life should be recognized.

As one woman from Indianapolis, Indiana, put it, "Come on, this is 1990! We should learn from the Europeans and catch up with the times. Working women with children need child care options."

Infants, Toddlers, and Working Mothers

It was apparent in many discussions that participants were hesitant about the tendency to turn children over to surrogate caretakers at an increasingly early age. While some mothers with young children have long held wage-earning jobs, only in recent years has a majority returned to the workplace while their children are still in diapers. In 1987, 52 percent of mothers with children under one year old were working, compared with 32 percent 10 years earlier.

When asked whether young children should be cared for exclusively by their mothers, many people were convinced that what might be fine for 3- and 4-year-olds may be damaging to infants and toddlers. By a 5-to-3 margin, a majority agreed that children between the ages of two and five do *not* need the exclusive care of their mother. But when asked about the care of infants and toddlers under the age of 2, a different pattern emerged. By a 2-to-1 margin, Forum participants agreed that such young children *should* be cared for exclusively by their mothers.

While some people seemed reluctant to talk about this for fear of making working mothers with very young children feel guilty, such feelings about the kind of care infants and toddlers need were expressed repeatedly.

Poor Kids

When discussion turned to the needs of low-income mothers and their children, there was strong support for expanding publicly funded child care programs for such children. Eight out of ten participants at the Forums agreed with the statement that low-income mothers need child care assistance. And 73 percent agreed that programs such as Head Start help preschool children do better, and help them break out of a cycle of poverty.

Not surprisingly, then, more than 7 out of 10 Forum participants endorsed the view that the federal government should offer child care assistance to all low-income families with preschool children. Judging by the outcome of the Forums, there is strong public support for President Bush's recent proposal to expand the Head Start program.

Child Care as a Public Responsibility

Families with young children span the entire income spectrum. Accordingly, a central question in the day care debate is whether the government should help all families, or most of them. If not, where should the line be drawn?

This has been a contentious point in congressional debate. In an era of tight budgetary constraints, some elected officials have said that government resources should be targeted to the neediest. Nonetheless, many people are convinced that preschool programs for children at *all* income levels should become a public responsibility — for the same reason that grammar school was first provided at public expense a century ago, for the same reason that Social Security became a public program half a century ago. The care of preschoolers, they insist, is a public problem which deserves a comprehensive solution and requires a clearly defined government role.

In most of the Forums, there was strong support for this view, at least in principle. In the words of a female Forum participant from Cincinnati, Ohio: "It should be possible for women of all economic brackets to do what they want. Government should help to make quality child care affordable for women who want to work."

"Universal day care for all preschool children, supported in part by the federal government, is needed for various reasons," said a man from Pekin, Illinois. "It is needed to enable young children to develop, to permit women to pursue careers on an equal basis, to relieve parental stress on the job, to enable families to have an adequate income, and to ensure an adequate number of workers for a strong economy."

By the time the Forums ended, a 2-to-1 majority agreed with the assertion that universal child care is needed to help parents balance the demands of work and family. Women favored this proposal more often than men, who are less convinced of the need for universal day care, and more concerned about the cost of providing it. When the ballots, distributed after the Forums ended, asked participants whether the government should subsidize child care for all preschool children, regardless of family income, more people agreed than disagreed but there was no clear consensus. On balance, women and younger Forum participants — those under 30 — supported this proposal by a considerable margin. On the other hand, men and Forum participants 45 and over disagreed with the proposal to subsidize child care for all preschool children as often as they agreed.

After talking about the child care problem for several hours, and considering various ways in which government could respond, most people were no more inclined at the end of the Forums than they were at the beginning to favor a universal system of publicly subsidized child care. Beyond the cost to taxpayers of greatly expanding publicly subsidized

child care, those who had reservations tended to be concerned about whether such subsidies would encourage more women to enter the work force, and whether surrogate care is in the best interest of young children. If Forum participants are representative of Americans as a whole, it appears that there is no clear agreement about publicly subsidized day care for families at all income levels.

Corporate Role

The conversations that took place in these Forums addressed not only government's role in helping families with young children, but also the corporate role, and the circumstances in which employers should be required to provide certain benefits. Recently, discussion about the employer's responsibility has focused on two kinds of benefits: parental leave; and on-site or near-site, corporate, child care facilities.

As things stand, beyond laws requiring that health conditions related to pregnancy must be treated like other short-term disabilities, it is up to employers to decide whether they will offer parental leave to facilitate the parent's adjustment to the newborn. As advocates of parental leave point out, the United States is the only industrial nation that does not guarantee parents the right to spend time with newborns without jeopardizing their jobs.

The outcome of these discussions indicates strong support for *requiring* employers to permit parental leave. By the end of the Forums, three-quarters of the participants agreed that corporations should be required to offer job-protected parental leave. Again, there were notable differences between men and women. While female Forum participants favored this proposal by an overwhelming 7-to-1, men supported it by a more modest 2-to-1 margin.

A majority of participants also favored corporate child care assistance. By the end of the Forums, those who agreed that corporations should be required to provide child care assistance to their employees outnumbered those who disagreed by about 2-to-1. Once again, women supported this proposal more often than men. While many men said they favor the idea of corporate child care assistance, they were more concerned about the cost of providing such services and its effect on corporate profits.

The central issue in the child care debate, says Dana E. Friedman, founder of the Families and Work Institute in New York, "is when personal problems become public responsibilities." Judging from what was said in these Forums, there is growing if somewhat mixed sentiment that care for preschool children should become a public responsibility to a greater extent. While there is no clear consensus in favor of universal public preschool programs, there is strong support for expanding both the government's role and the employer's role to help parents take care of preschool children.

A Question of Quality

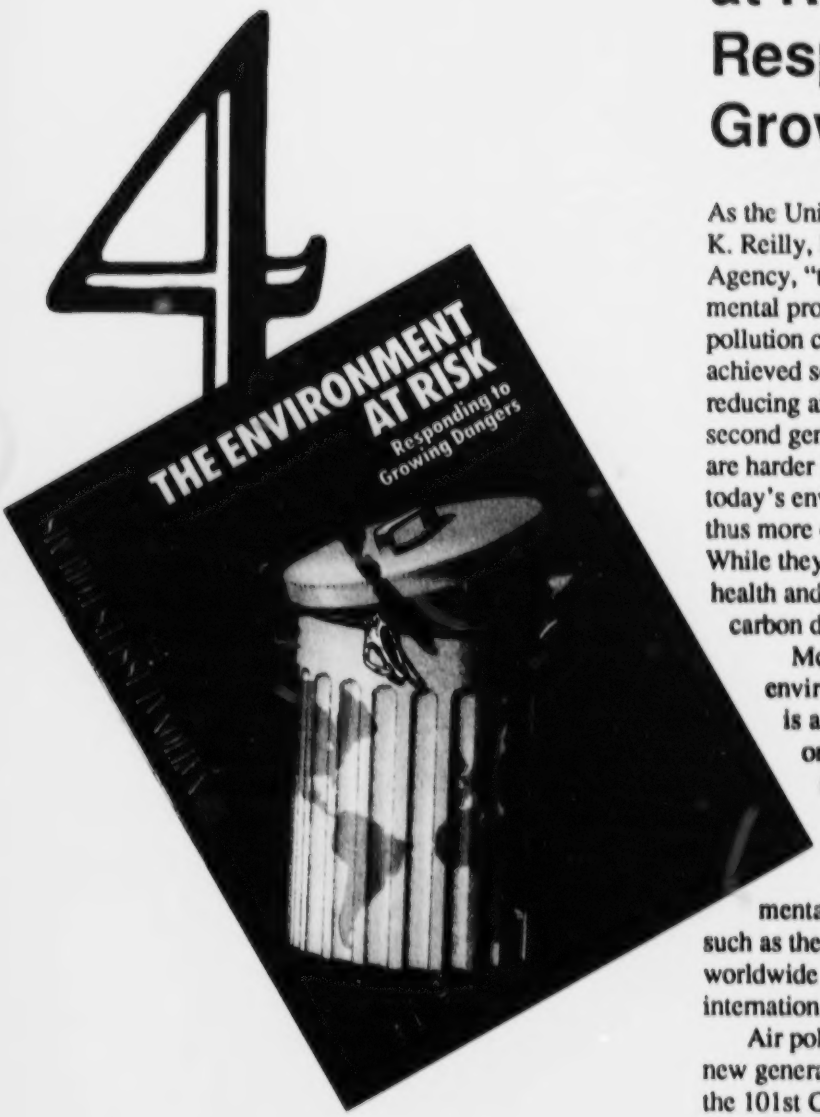
Eight out of ten Forum participants indicated that there is an absence of high-quality, affordable child care in their communities. During discussion, it became clear that the biggest concern for many parents, regardless of their income, is the absence of high-quality child care services, not their cost.

Despite years of lobbying by children's advocates, virtually no federal regulations cover the care of young children. Each state makes its own rules, which vary from strict enforcement of detailed licensing procedures to an absence of state-imposed standards. In the Forums, as in Congress, the pros and cons of federal regulation of child care proved to be highly contentious. Some people said they fear federal regulations may amount to little more than bureaucratic red tape, and that confusing regulations might drive some family day care providers out of business. But a majority supported a more aggressive federal role in guaranteeing quality in child care facilities.

It is unconscionable, said a woman from Huron, South Dakota, that, while the government regulates the food we eat, the airlines, and most financial institutions, there is no quality standard for child care centers. To protect America's children, she concluded, "we need universal standards for day care."

Particular concern was expressed about the low salaries paid to child care workers, and about high staff turnover. The best way to improve child care, said a woman from Lubbock, Texas, is to "raise the salaries of child care workers so we can keep qualified people in these positions."

Summarizing the result of discussion in Niles Township, Illinois, on this point, the moderator offered an accurate summary of the feelings of most Forum participants nationwide. "If we leave regulation of child care facilities to the states, we'll have 50 different standards, and some states will have virtually none. The main role of the federal government should be to set standards about the qualifications of day care workers and facilities. Good day care facilities are good for society. It's time for the federal government to play a role in setting standards."



The Environment at Risk: Responding to Growing Dangers

As the United States enters the 1990s, says William K. Reilly, head of the Environmental Protection Agency, "the country faces an array of environmental problems even more daunting than the pollution crises of the past generation." Having achieved some success over the past 20 years in reducing air and water pollution, the nation faces a second generation of environmental problems that are harder to cope with for several reasons. Many of today's environmental hazards are less visible, and thus more difficult to call to the public's attention. While they may pose a serious threat to human health and the environment, no one sees acid rain, carbon dioxide emissions, or ozone in the air.

Moreover, responsibility for many of today's environmental hazards is widely shared. There is a growing realization that virtually everyone who owns a car, uses a power lawnmower, or electricity generated by burning fossil fuel contributes to the air pollution problem.

Finally, many of today's environmental problems are global in scope. Problems such as the greenhouse effect arise because of worldwide habits, and their solution will require international action.

Air pollution provides a vivid illustration of this new generation of environmental problems. Because the 101st Congress has been reexamining and amending the Clean Air Act — the first comprehensive revision of that Act since 1977 — it is a particularly appropriate time for citizens to examine various measures that might be taken to protect air quality, as well as their costs and consequences. That is what thousands of Forum participants did in discussions about the environment that focused on four aspects of the air pollution problem: urban smog, acid rain, erosion of the ozone shield, and the greenhouse effect.

The debate over clean air — which in several respects illustrates what is at issue in the broader

debate over environmental protection — is about how we should act in the face of scientific uncertainty, which risks are acceptable risks, and what actions are most promising as a way of reducing pollution.

As reflected in the additional cost of the new clean air measures contemplated in Congress, Americans will almost certainly have to pay more for environmental protection. But how much is too much? In the name of environmental stewardship, are individuals willing to give up certain conveniences (such as the freedom to drive gasoline-powered vehicles when and where we please) as well as other products and practices that are damaging to the environment?

As Forum participants addressed these questions, they grappled with the same issues that members of Congress have been considering as they rewrite the Clean Air Act and make decisions that will affect air quality in the United States for years to come.

Local Issues, Global Concerns

Recent polls have consistently shown that the American public is deeply concerned about the environment. There is a widely shared sense that environmental problems are getting worse, and public efforts at the national level have been inadequate.

Over the past year, a wave of initiatives at state and local level provides evidence of the public's growing preoccupation with environmental hazards. This past May, for example, the Vermont legislature passed the first law in the nation prohibiting motor vehicle air conditioners from using chlorofluorocarbons, chemical coolants that have been linked to destruction of the ozone layer. In July, the City Council in Irvine, California, passed a far-reaching measure to control ozone-depleting chemicals. In a sense, such local actions seem idealistic, even quixotic, since the sacrifices they require will not result in any special benefits to local citizens. But these actions reflect a growing sense that more should be done to prevent irreversible damage in the future.

That was one of the themes of the NIF discussions. Most participants were deeply concerned about damage to the environment. With regard to each of the four air quality problems addressed, Forum participants agreed overwhelmingly that these are serious public problems.

Costs and Consequences

The sense of urgency conveyed by Forum participants generally corresponded to what national polls have found. Since 1981, the *New York Times*/CBS poll has on various occasions asked people whether they agree that "protecting the environment is so important that standards cannot be too high, and continuing environmental improvements must be made regardless of cost." Over the past nine years, the percentage of Americans who agree with that statement has increased from about 45 percent to almost 80 percent.

But some elected officials see a problem. "Everyone realizes that we need to clean up the environment," said California Representative Carlos Moorhead at congressional hearings on clean air in September. "But no one likes the costs." For this reason, it is worth noting what took place in Forums when participants looked at the projected costs and consequences of three distinctive courses of action on the environment.

Advocates of the first of three perspectives examined in these Forums insist that tinkering with existing technologies by adding emission control devices isn't enough. It is not realistic, they say, to think that we can protect the environment while using technologies that are inherently harmful. For this reason, fundamental changes must be made — and made quickly — even if they require significant economic costs.

Advocates of a second perspective are convinced that by carefully balancing economic protection with economic growth, and by adopting new emission control devices and energy-efficient technologies as they become available, the nation can accomplish what is necessary to keep pollution at acceptably low levels — without sacrificing economic growth.

From a third perspective, the most practical way to protect the environment is not to ban certain products and practices entirely, but to provide economic incentives to remind producers and consumers of environmental consequences, and to encourage more prudent behavior. Using these three perspectives as a framework for discussion, Forum participants engaged in extended discussion about which course of action should be taken.

There was considerable discussion of the cost of measures intended to deal with urban smog and acid rain. A participant in an Orange County, California, Forum said he thought the President's clean air plan aims too low. He cited an American Lung Association report which concluded that without improved cleanup efforts, Americans will face an additional $40-50 billion in health-related costs each year.

Another man in that Forum responded by

quoting a report from the Business Roundtable, which says that the clean air proposals now on the table would force industry to pay annual pollution control costs of as much as $100 billion a year. He quoted a corporate executive who calls the Clean Air Act amendments proposed in the Senate "a multimillion-dollar millstone being placed around the necks of industry" in an attempt to gain "trivial environmental protection improvements."

For all the discussion in these Forums about the high cost of environmental protection, it is striking that the consensus was that the nation should *not* take a go-slow approach, carefully balancing costs and environmental consequences. By the time the Forums ended, that was the preferred course of action for less than one-quarter of the participants.

In contrast, there was increasing support for the first perspective, which advocates rapid and decisive action, including immediate steps to move away from the use of technologies that are damaging to the environment. By the end of the Forums, this course of action was supported by somewhat more than half of the participants. In particular, it was the view of Forum participants who are 45 or older.

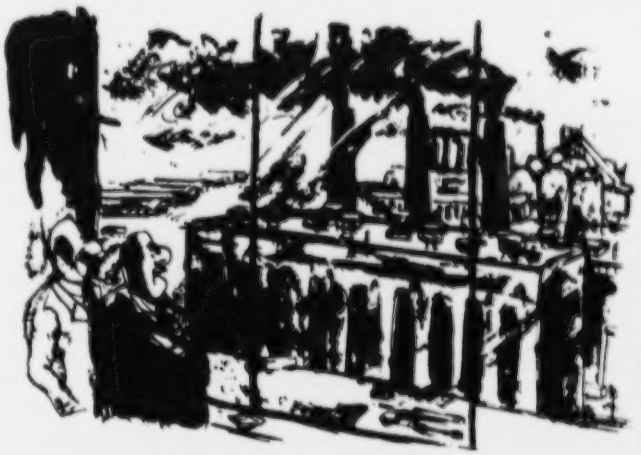
Many people insisted that they are ready to take individual responsibility for the environment, and to change their daily habits to act more responsibly. However, some felt that such changes are unrealistic. As a participant in a Lincoln, Nebraska, Forum put it: "It's hard enough to get people to make changes in their diet to lower cholesterol. How are you going to get people to make changes for the common good? A lot of people don't even see the problem."

"Public apathy is the cause of many environmental problems," said a female participant in the Tampa area. "Most people aren't doing anything because the problem hasn't touched them personally." Still, the majority sentiment in that meeting, as in many others, was that citizens must make changes in their daily habits to protect the environment.

Marketplace Incentives

In another respect, the Forums provided a test of one new approach to environmental protection — using market incentives to remind producers and consumers of environmental consequences.

In recent years, there has been a growing sense of frustration among environmentalists and policy experts with the legalistic "command and control" approach to environmental regulation. In its acid rain provisions, the Bush administration's clean air bill proposes an alternative: pollution permits that would allow businesses to choose the cheapest way to get rid of pollutants.



"Where there's smoke, there's money."

To many Forum participants, marketplace incentives were a new idea, and not a very appealing one. As many people commented, it sounds like giving permission to pollute when firms are wealthy enough to afford the permits. As a general strategy for dealing with environmental problems, only about one in ten participants concluded that this is the best course of action.

The Acid Rain Controversy

Discussions about acid rain and global warming were interesting because of the light they shed on how the public wants to proceed when faced with scientific uncertainty.

Conflicts over acid rain have long divided the nation, and they are a major reason why the Clean Air Act has not been recently amended. The problem is that what is good for one region is bad for another. In the Northeastern states, which are on the receiving end, reduced sulfur dioxide emissions mean lakes saved or trout caught. In the Midwest, which is responsible for much of the high-sulfur coal mined and home to many industries and utilities that use it as fuel, reductions in sulfur dioxide mean lost jobs.

In another respect, at issue in the acid rain controversy is whether action should be taken before environmental hazards are clearly established. Scientists still debate how much damage acid rain actually does to lakes, rivers, and trees. While some forest areas have been damaged— apparently by acid rain — other equally vulnerable areas show no signs of damage, and scientists are unable to explain why.

Forum participants acknowledged these scientific uncertainties, yet all but about 10 percent were

convinced of a need for action. Three out of ten advocated rapid, immediate reductions in the use of high-sulfur coal, even if it harms the midwestern economy and leads to some layoffs. But the view held by slightly more than half of the Forum participants by the end of the Forums was that such measures should be phased in to minimize damage to the midwestern economy.

So it appears that the President's proposed plan, which calls for reducing sulfur dioxide emissions by 10 million tons each year, may be broadly shared.

Forecast: Global Warming

Scientific uncertainty is also a central issue in the debate over the greenhouse effect. Some scientists say that because of an accumulation of heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere, global temperature will rise by 3 to 8 degrees by the middle of the next century, with catastrophic effects ranging from parched farmland to coastal cities threatened by rising tides. Others, however, question whether there is conclusive proof that greenhouse effects are already apparent. Even if global temperature rises by several degrees over the next century, some question how serious the effects will be.

Forum participants talked about the likely effects of global warming and about the staggering costs of measures to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. By the end of the Forums, about half of the participants were convinced that warming will cause slow, incremental changes — such as a gradual change in the latitude at which certain crops can be grown. A roughly equal number of people concluded with a more pessimistic assessment that widespread flooding, drought, and famine is likely.

If there was no agreement about probable effects over the next 50-75 years, there was a clearly shared understanding that global warming is extremely serious — a view shared by two-thirds of the participants — and that immediate action is warranted. "By the time scientists figure out what is happening," said a woman from Tennyson, Indiana, "time for effective action will have run out. Something has to be done, starting *now*."

In this respect, the majority view of Forum participants was unambiguous: if we wait for conclusive proof before taking decisive action on such problems as acid rain and the greenhouse effect, most people agreed, it will be too late.

Mandate for Action

Just how should the country deal with global warming and sulfur dioxide emissions (the lion's share of

ENVIRONMENTAL CATASTROPHE
LIKE MY CONSTITUENT SAYS, WAIT FOR IT TO DROP, THEN WE POLITICIANS WILL DO SOMETHING!
JIM MORIN, THE MIAMI HERALD

which come from midwestern power plants) that cause acid rain? Many Forum participants voiced serious reservations about the use of nuclear power plants as an alternative. In the Post-Forum ballots, those who opposed building more nuclear power plants outnumbered those who favored doing so by a slight margin.

However, solar energy as an alternative fuel source was regarded more favorably. Roughly three-quarters of the participants favored increasing government funding to spur development of solar energy.

Here, too, as in drug crisis Forums, many people indicated a willingness to pay more for a decisive program of public action. "Let's do what is necessary to protect the environment," said a man from Pittsburg, California, "even if it means slightly higher taxes." Just as most participants said they would agree to a tax increase of $50 to spur development of solar energy, a two-thirds majority said they would agree to a $50 tax increase to provide additional mass transit in urban areas, to reduce the air pollution caused by gasoline-fueled vehicles.

Asked what message they would like to convey to elected officials on the topic of environmental protection, participants repeatedly voiced their impatience, their sense that public action is inadequate to the dimensions of a growing problem.

Elected officials, said a man from Evansville, Indiana, "are simply not making the environment a priority." Addressing leaders, a man from Bath, Indiana, said, "You are responsible not only for representing the interests of your current constituents, but also for the well-being of future generations." The nation's leaders, said a woman from Nashville, Tennessee, "should lead and not follow public opinion on environmental issues."

NATIONAL ISSUES FORUMS

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"I know no safe

depository of the

ultimate powers of the

society but the people

themselves; and if we

think them not

enlightened enough to

exercise their control

with a wholesome

discretion, the remedy

is not to take it from

them, but to inform

their discretion by

education."

CITIZEN COMMENT. . .

THE DRUG CRISIS

"Something needs to be done now. Let's start at the source in Colombia and Bolivia, and pay farmers to stop growing illicit drugs."

— Troy, Ohio

"Let's stop putting on a political show that makes it look as if we're doing something in Colombia. We have to solve the problem where the demand exists, in our country."

— Marietta, Ohio

"We've got to send a message to the drug dealers. They need to know that we will not tolerate the destruction of our community and our country. We will take any measures possible to stop them."

— West Palm Beach, Florida

"Educating kids is the key. If they knew the effects and the dangers, they might think twice before getting involved."

— Long Beach, California

THE DAY CARE DILEMMA

"We should learn from the Europeans and catch up with the times. Working women with children need child care options."

— Indianapolis, Indiana

"Being a good mother to a young child is the most important job in the world."

— Indianapolis, Indiana

"Universal day care for all preschool children, supported in part by the federal government, is needed. It is needed to enable young children to develop, to permit women to pursue careers on an equal basis, to relieve parental stress on the job, to enable families to have an adequate income, and to ensure an adequate number of workers for a strong economy."

— Pekin, Illinois

"Raise the salaries of child care workers so we can keep qualified people in these positions."

— Lubbock, Texas

THE ENVIRONMENT AT RISK

"It's hard enough to get people to make changes in their diet to lower cholesterol. How are you going to get people to make changes for environmental problems?"

— Lincoln, Nebraska

"Let's do what is necessary to protect the environment, even if it means slightly higher taxes."

— Pittsburg, California

"The nation's leaders should lead and not follow public opinion on environmental issues."

— Nashville, Tennessee

"Most people aren't doing anything because the problem hasn't touched them personally."

— Tampa, Florida